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MARRIAGE SYSTEMS, FAMILY LAWS, PROPERTY OWNERSHIP AND WOMEN

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MARRIAGE SYSTEMS AND THE STATUS OF WOMEN IN ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

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Swami Dayanand, when asked why he had bowed and said 'Namaste' with folded hands to a little girl, said "She is the future mother".

"Blessed are the homes that honour Women," is a popular belief of many, yet the status of women in marriage systems is inferior to their civil, political and economic status. That this should be so is ironical indeed as that very 'motherhood' which has been deified stands in the way of women being given equal status in marriage.

The reasons for this situation are not hard to find so far as South East Asia is concerned; the marriage systems have been treated as 'untouchable' and have suffered deliberate neglect at the hands of the state. Political expediency, the fear of annoying religious and ethnic leaders and their equally orthodex followers, male domination in decision-making processes, the inability to break through traditions, customs and ancient mythology discriminatory to women are among the factors which perpetuate the inferior status of women in marriage systems. The impact of these factors varies among countries in the region.

The civil disabilities that women suffered in the past as a result of the concept that woman was the property of man or the feudal doctrine of coverture based in part upon biblical notions of the unity of flash of husband and wife have largely been done away with. These had the effect that the very being or legal existence of the woman was suspended during the marriage and 'the oneness' in reality meant that 'the one was the husband'.

Most of women today have in theory at least the right to own property and dispose of it, enter into contracts, sue and be sued in court in civil and criminal matters. The participation of women in the liberation movements of their countries in this region has entitled them to participate fully in political activities and they have the right to vote in all elections and hold public office.

Economic rights in many countries have been obtained by women through the international instruments, constitutions, and legal enactments which declare that women have the right to employments in all occupation and to equal pay for equal work.

It is worth noting that only a few countries of this region have included a provision relating to marriage and family in their constitutions.

Article 24 of the Japanese constitution states:

> Marriage shall be based only on the mutual consent of both sexes and it shall be maintained through mutual co-operation with the equal rights of husband and wife as a basis. With regard to choice of spouse, property rights, inheritance, choice of domicile, divorce and other matters pertaining to marriage and the family, laws shall be enacted from the standpoint of individual dignity and the essential equality of the sexes.

Articles 48 and 49 of the constitution of the People's Republic of China grant women equal rights with men in family life and provide for protection by the State to marriage, the family and mother and child. Article 49 further casts a duty on both husband and wife to practise family planning and prohibits violation of the freedom of marriage and maltreatment of old people, women and children.

Article 24 of the constitution of Viet Nam also grants equal rights to women in domestic life and protects marriage and the family.

Despite the institution of international instruments beginning with the Charter of the United Nations (1945); the International Bill of Human Rights; the Convention on the Nationality of Married Women; Convention on Consent to Marriage, Minimum Age for Marriage and Registration of Marriages; Recommendation on Consent to Marriage, Minimum Age for Marriage and Registration of Marriages; Declaration on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women; and the Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (1979) which have specific provisions relevant to marriage systems, national legislation in this area is often deficient.

The inadequacy of legislation in many countries in this field may warrant the United Nations undertaking the task of drafting a detailed model family law code for member countries to adopt. The existing constitutions in this region grant equality and freedom to women. An analysis of the statutes enacted in the various countries of this region in the post-constitution period shows that in many of the countries efforts at reform and equality relating to marriage and family have been piecemeal.

There is need for a total review of the legislation in these countries relating to and affecting marriage systems and enactment of family law codes. Australia, Japan and China have fairly comprehensive family laws to achieve the avowed objectives of the relevant international instruments.

Yet the assertion of faith in the dignity and worth of the human person sounds hollow in view of the fact that even today the basic postulate that woman is as much a human being as man and thus entitled to the same freedoms, rights and responsibilities, has yet to find broadly-based acceptance.

In other countries the concept of and necessity for complete equality between women and men is accepted but the misinterpretations of religious precepts or the non-acceptance of the idea that laws must change with changed conditions obstruct the elimination of discriminatory family laws.

In some countries the lack of realization of the urgency of the need for total reform or the absence of political will results in the continuation of the laws that violate the rights of married women.

A marriage system must necessarily take into account the laws, the customs, the ceremonies, the traditions, current issues and attitudes, law alone does not constitute a marriage system - at times law appears to be even irrelevant to the factual situation -- yet since the legal status of the parties is determined by law irrespective of the parties' intentions or even awareness of the laws governing them, it becomes necessary to understand the legal position of women in a marriage system. This is an extremely difficult and complex task in view of the fact that South Asia is a vast region with widely different and diverse cultures, races, religions, ethnic groups, influences, political idologies, laws, legal, socio-economic systems and differing stages of development all of which directly affect marriage systems.

The marriage systems even within each country of this region are extremely varied. Innumerable marriage systems exist among the indigenous people of every country and they may vary with each clan. The matriarchal, matrilineal, matrilocal, the patriarchal, patrilineal, patrilocal or the combination of both systems exist side by side. Marriages can be monogamous, polygamous, hypergamous, polyandrous. These systems mostly based on custom are an exception to the laws enacted with respect of each major group of persons depending on the religion they belong to.

The marriage system for the majority population in South and South East Asian countries is patriarchal, patrilineal and patrilocal. The extended family, kinship society and the joint family system exist in many countries. These create special problems. Those who have adopted nuclear family system experience difficulties in the existing role pattern of women and men when there is no one to look after the women in times of sickness or confinement particularly in countries where the domestic servant facility has either disappeared or is scarce.

Many of the countries of South Asia became independent in the 40's. All the countries in this region have guaranteed equal rights to women under the existing constitutions and most of them have enacted legislation beginning with 50's to bring about equality in the marriage laws. But there are some countries, particularly the Islamic states of Pakistan and Bangladesh which need to make far reaching changes in their laws relating to women to bring about equality in the marriage system.

The Muslims who constitute the majority in these countries are governed by Muslim Law based on the Koran. It is a matter of great concern that many of the commands attributed to Koran and the Prophet may not be in the spirit of Koran and may be misinterpretations of the true concepts by those without adequate grounding in notions of right and wrong as stipulated in Muslim Law.

J.D. Anderson in his book on 'Islamic Law in the Muslim World', 1959, states that President Bourguiba in his forthright way asserted that ideas which were valid in the past, today offend the human spirit, such as polygamy. "Islam had liberated the spirit and bidden men reflect on religious laws in order to adapt them to human progress". The Tunisian Act of 1957 prohibited polygamy, a prohibition which is said to find its justification in other Islamic provisions that a man should confine himself to one wife unless confident that he is capable of treating a plurality of wives with equal justice, and the assertion that both experience and revelation have made it clear that such impartiality is in fact unattainable."

These stringent conditions were like Portia asking Shylock, in 'The Merchant of Venice', to take his pound of flesh from Antonio but not to shed a drop of blood. She said:

/"Shed

"Shed thou no blood; nor cut thou less nor more
But just a pound of flesh: if thou tak'st more
Or less than a just pound, be it but so much
As makes it light or heavy in the substance,
Or the division of the twentieth part
Of one poor scruple: nay, if the scale do turn
But in the estimation of a hair,
Thou diest, and all thy goods are confiscate."

She won her case.

The legal system of the Muslim world may broadly be divided into three groups: (1) those that still regard the Sharia as the fundamental law and still apply it more or less in its entirety; (2) those that have abandoned the Sharia and have wholly substituted a secular law (Tunisia and Turkey); (3) those that have reached some compromise between these two positions.

Turkey has turned completely secular in the matter of all family laws.

Islam, in fact, punished a person who lightly divorced his wife by saying that he could not have her back because she had cohabited with another man.

In some countries the healthy tenets of Islam are ignored and there is a great resistance to change in these countries. It is time that interpretations which will do justice to their own religion, their women and themselves are considered.

India

Hindus are governed by Hindu Law as amended by the various Acts passed in the 1950s in the post-constitution period. This legislation extends to the whole of India except the state of Jammu and Kashmir and applies also to Hindus domiciled in the territories to which this Act extends who are outside these territories. Since Hinduism is a way of life and not a religion in the strict sence, the term Hindu includes any person who is a Hindu by religion in any of its forms or developments including a Virashaiva, a Lingayat or a follower of the Brahme, Prarthana or Arya Samaj, Buddist, Jain, or Sikh. Muslims are governed by Mahomedan Law as modified in different countries. Christians are governed by the Christian Law which has undergone considerable

change in many countries according to the needs of the time. Similarly the Parsees and the Jews are covered by their own independent laws. Buddhism, having spread to South East Asia, has had considerable influence on the marriage systems in these countries, as has the thought of Confucious and many other thinkers and law givers of this region.

The status of woman throughout the ages (apart from a very brief period when woman was said to be as free as man and equal to him in all respects, including sexual behaviour) has been in all these religions & philosophies inferior to that of man and this is reflected in the marriage systems of the countries of this region.

The goal set by the constitution makers in Article 44 of the Constitution of India in the Directive Principles Chapter of making an endeavour to secure for citizens a uniform civil code throughout the territory of India has yet to be achieved. The amendments made in Hindu Law by legislative enactments, the Hindu Marriage Act, 1955, the Hindu Succession Act, 1956, the Hindu Minority and Guardianship Act, 1956, the Hindu Adoption & Maintenance Act, 1956, have enhanced the legal status of women. A Hindu woman today is equal to man in matters of marriage, separation, divorce, maintenance, custody of children. A daughter has equal share with the son in the property of her parents and Hindu marriages are now monogamous. These acts have brought in concept of contract to Hindu marriages which are sacramental (Sanskara).

Discrimination, however, still exists in matters of inheritance as a daughter is not entitled to a share in the co-parcenary property from birth as a son is, nor is she entitled to ask for the partition of this property. A mother is still not the natural guardian of her children. The woman does not have rights as joint owner of property acquired during the existence of marriage, as no monetary value is put on her work as a housewife or even as an agricultural worker in the fields in the rural areas. This causes great hardship to a woman particularly at the time of separation and divorce.

Since the majority of the women are home makers the non-existence of a right to the income of the husband makes her dependent on the man financially and psychologically.

The Constitution of India in Article 15 (3) permits enactment of special provisions for women and children. Yet the rights of the husband in the absence of community of property and income of the husband, to his right to will away his property to whom he likes cause injustice.

There are several other instances which because of the historical disadvantage suffered by women need correction; e.g. the jurisdiction to entertain a petition for relief in matrimonial matters is with courts where the marriage took place or where the parties last resided together causes difficulties. Very often the woman, after leaving her matrimonial home goes back to her parents or finds work in a place which may be far away from either of these places. Such procedural reforms are extremely important because the inability to seek relief particularly for women without incomes can be extremely frustrating.

Registration of a Hindu marriage is provided for but is not compulsory which in the context of the Dowry problem, causes hardship. Child marriage is prohibited; widow's re-marriage is permitted.

A Muslim marriage (nikah) is a contract made between two persons of opposite sexes. The legal essentials to the validity of a Mohamedan marriage are that there should be a proposal made by or on behalf of one of the parties to the marriage and an acceptance of the proposal by or on behalf of the other in the presence and hearing of two male or one male and two female witnesses, who must be sane and adult Mohamedans. Mohamedan law does not prescribe that the proposal and acceptance should be in any particular form. Evidence that the husband agreed to the dower and the wife gave her consent constitutes sufficient proof of proposal and acceptance.

Muslim women in India suffer discrimination under Muslim Law. Limited polygamy is legal. While a man can have four wives, the same is not permissible to a woman.* The Muslim male can divorce his wife at will without assigning any reason but the Muslim women can do so only on the limited grounds mentioned in the Dissolution of Muslim Marriage Act, 1939.

A Muslim woman is discriminated against in the matter of inheritance in that the female heir receives a share half the size of the male heir e.g. a daughter receives half share of the son and a sister half that of her brother.

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* The polygamy permitted to Muslim man in fact is often taken advantage of by Hindus who convert themselves to Muslims.

The beneficial provision for women in Muslim Law is that a person cannot will away his property or give it away as a gift without providing for the widow.

The father is the natural guardian of the children. The Muslim women is entitled to limited maintenance, but she is also entitled to maintenance under the Criminal Procedure Code which is applicable to women of all faiths. The Supreme Court in a recent decision held that a woman was entitled to maintenance out of the estate of her late husband. This was a case under the Special Marriage Act.

Christians are governed by the Indian Divorce Act, 1869. Marriage is monogamous under the Christian Law. The only ground for dissolution of the marriage recognized by the Act is adultery. For the husband adultery simpliciter is sufficient for divorce, while the wife must prove incestuous adultery, bigamy with adultery, or cruelty with adultery. The Christian woman is also entitled to divorce on the ground of conviction of her husband's sodomy, rape, or bestiality. This and the ground of bigamy is also available to a Hindu woman.

Parsees who are governed by the Parsee Marriage and Divorce Act of 1936 have equal rights to divorce based on the fault theory, with an additional right to the wife when she has been forced by her husband to prostitute herself. Parsi marriage is monogamous.

The Special Marriage Act, 1954, provides a special form of marriage to facilitate marriage between persons of different faiths which after requisite notice can be performed before a Registrar of Marriages and registered. Marriage performed under this Act of any member of Hindu undivided family has the effect of severance from such family.

Buddhism was recognized in all countries east of Persia as the religion of civilized mankind from the time of Ashoka till the rise of Islam. It spread to almost the whole of South East Asia.

Sumaingala, a married woman who embraced Buddhism, sang thus:

"O Woman, Well set free, How free am I,
How thoroughly free from Kitchen drudgery,
Stained and squalid 'mong my cooking pots,
My brutal husband ranked even less
Than the sun-shades he sits and weaves always.
Purged now of all my former lust and hate,
I dwell musing at ease beneath the shade
Of spreading boughs - O, but 'tis well with me."

Marriage according to Buddhism was a contract and not a sacrament. As Buddhism recognized the individuality and independence of women who were entitled to salvation in their own right whether married or unmarried, the position of married women improved during this period as Buddhist Law favours equality of the sexes and in many ways treats marriages as creating partnership in goods. Widows and divorced women are allowed to remarry. If parents did not get a girl married before the age of twenty, she had the right to marry anyone she pleased. It was specifically ordained that no woman could be married against her will. Monogamy was advocated.

In countries which came under the influence of Confucion thought, the relationship between woman and man was one of authority and obedience. The woman was expected to obey her father when single, her husband when married and her son as a widow.

Pakistan

The growing demand for women's rights in Pakistan is being resisted by those who wish to put extreme interpretations on the teachings of the Koran. Instead of bringing about reforms in the existing laws in accord with what has been done in other Muslim countries, greater restrictions are being placed on women.

Women have been banned from participating in spectator sports except before an all female audience. The country's sportswomen were outraged when only one woman was allowed to represent Pakistan in the Asian Games held in New Delhi last November.

The more serious are recent proposals of the Council of Islamic Ideology which has been reviewing and rewriting Pakistan's laws. These include an amendment to the law of evidence which would make the testimony of one male witness equal to that of two women. To become law, the amendment only requires President Zia's signature.

There is also discussion on introducing the Islamic system of qisas, or blood money, paid in compensation to the relatives of murder victims, which puts the value of a female victim at half that of male.

The proposals have provoked an unprecedented demonstration by urban women in defence of their rights. A march by women in Lahore in February 1983 led by the Women's Action Forum (WAF) was broken up by police using tear gas and baton charges. The brutality of the police action caused widespread criticism and encouraged a serious reappraisal of the place of women in Pakistan's Islamic society.

A recent order by a District Judge to lash in public and jail with hard labour a blind woman victim of rape for sex outside marriage angered Pakistani women who argued that this is contrary to the humanitarian principles of Islam. The public flogging of a 35 years old widow on an adultery charge with 15 lashes in front of 5,000 people and denying her water when she asked for it twice during the flogging has been severely condemned.

The Women's Action Forum has demanded immediately cancellation of this primitive and faulty law.

Bangladesh

In Bangladesh, the Muslims are governed by Muslim Law and the Hindus by the old Hindu Law. There has been very little reform in matters of family law for these women. The Muslim Family Law Ordinance of 1961, restricted the power of divorce of man somewhat as he has to apply to the Arbitrary Counsel before he can divorce his wife.

The Bangladesh marriage system and the marriage laws however continue to be discriminatory. Marriages are arranged by the parents and in spite of Child Marriage Restraint Act, 1929, child marriages are prevalent. Dowry is prevalent in spite of the fact that the Muslim Law provides for "Meher Dower". Polygamy is permitted and purdah is prevalent.

According to the 1974 census, out of 37,071,000 males and 34,407,000 females, 29,000 males and 235,000 females were considered as divorced. Married females (14,067,000) outnumbered married males (13,927,000). This indicates that polygamy is practised. One effect is that women in Bangladesh suffer from poverty, illiteracy, and destitution, more than the men do.

A recent ordinance on cruelty to women, Deterrent Punishment Ordinance, 1983, promulgated by the Council of Ministers to stop the harassment of women by men, sometimes by their husbands and others, has been welcomed by women in Bangladesh.

/Nepal

Nepal

In Nepal the First Muluki Code (Civil Code) was enacted in the year 1854 and continued until 1963. It was more or less based on ancient Hindu Law. In March 1963, it was replaced by a new uniform Civil Code which was made applicable to Nepalese of all religions, Hindus as well as non-Hindu (Buddhists and Muslims).

The Code of 1963 recognizes a woman's independent personality; makes free consent of a bride necessary for her marriage and has also made provisions for annulling a forced marriage. The new Code has also introduced for the first time a wife's right to divorce. The Code makes child marriage and unequal marriages punishable. (where difference of age is more than 20 years)

The Sixth Amendment in the National Code (Muluki Act) made during the International Women's Year (1975) granted a daughter who remained unmarried till the age of 35 an equal share with her brothers in parental property.

A wife has now absolute right to dispose of all the movable and half of the immovable property received by her as her share in her husband's property. In a joint family where a husband is a co-parcenor, his wife has only an interest in her husband's share. A wife who has obtained a divorce from her husband has a right to alimony for some period.

There are two types of women's property Stri Amsa (Woman's Estate) and Stridhan (Woman's exclusive property). Stri Amsa may consist of Daiji (gifts given to her on her father and mother side) and Pewa (gifts given to her by the husband, his relatives and friends).

In Nepal polygamy is allowed, but polyandry which is a customary practice in certain northern regions of the country, is not recognized as valid.

Originally Jari was punishable by recovery of compensation by the wronged husband from the other man. The feminist movement opposed the payment of compensation as it implied that the wife is a personal property of the husband.

Sri Lanka

Sri Lanka ratified on July 18, 1980, the Convention of the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women. In spite of a countrywide campaign for bringing equality to women, discrimination against women persists, particularly in the economic field. The division of labour is biased in terms of sex, which helps to perpetuate inequality at work, banning women from occupations which offer more responsibility, higher pay and greater job satisfaction. For example, certain professions like teaching, nursing and typing were given feminine associations. The key area of discrimination is that of wages in the tea estates where open and legal discrimination is practised, unlike other sectors of employment where women are generally entitled to equal wages. Women have very little say in the formulation and implementation of social policies aiming to remedy inequality.

In Sri Lanka the women under the Kandyan Marriage & Divorce Act, 1954, are discriminated against in matter of divorce: while the husband can ask for divorce on the ground of adultery, the wife must prove incestuous adultery combined with gross cruelty.

The orthodox aspect of Buddhism which ordained that women must rise early and he last to retire speak sweetly, manage the home well, look after the guests and be obedient to their husband has prevailed.

Singapore

There are presently two systems of law regulating marriage and the family in Singapore. A statutory civil system governs non-Muslims and Muslims are governed by the Shariah Law. In 1961, with the enactment of the Women's Charter, polygamy among non-Muslims was abolished.

Part VI of the Charter deals with the "Rights and Duties of Husband and Wife". Section 45 attempts to provide a guide for the behaviour of married couples in Singapore by declaring that husband and wife "shall be mutually bound to co-operate with each other in safeguarding the interests of the union and in caring and providing for the children", and that they "shall have equal rights in the running of the matrimonial household". And, in line with the concept of sexual equality, the section also declares that husband and wife shall have the right to "engage in any trade or profession or in social activities". The wife shall furthermore have the "right to use her own surname and name separately. However, the surname of a child shall ordinarily be the surname of the father of the child.

According to Dr. Molly Cheang, as no special enforcement of these provisions existed, the legislature's aim was to educate and influence social behaviour rather than regulate it.

The Charter, however, gave the women a right to an independent domicile and the right to property generally, to contract and to sue in tort.

Before 1 June 1981, a married woman's domicile was, in law, dependent upon that of her husband's. This was a major disability in that since a common Singapore domicile was a pre-requisite to invoke the court's jurisdiction in divorce proceedings, a married woman could be deprived of resort to the courts for a divorce by a deserting husband. Section 45A of the Charter has now removed this incapacity and a married woman can now acquire her own domicile.

There is community of property and equal division of property at the time of divorce. Even where matrimonial property has been acquired by the sole effort of one spouse only, for example the husband, the court shall in making the division nevertheless consider the contribution made by the other spouse (in this case the wife) to the welfare of the family.

The Women's Charter provisions on the solemnization, dissolution and matrimonial property division do not apply to Muslims. Marriages between Muslims are governed by Muslim law as modified by the Administration of Muslim Law Act.

The right of polygamy in Muslim marriage though still existing in theory, is regulated in practice by section 90(2) of the Administration of Muslim Law Act which provides that no marriage shall be solemnized if the man to be wedded is already married to any other person except by a Kathi or with his written consent. In this way polygamy among Muslims has to a great extent been restricted in fact.

A Muslim woman cannot marry a man who does not profess Islam while a Muslim man can marry a woman who is either a Muslim or who believes in Scriptures accepted and acknowledged by Muslim Law (e.g. a Christian or a Jewess).

Although section 47(1) of the Administration of Muslim Law permits a Muslim woman to apply to the Shariah Court for a divorce in accordance with Muslim law yet she can only be granted a divorce if the husband consents to it.

Male heirs generally get double the share of female heirs.

Section 65A of the Charter empowers the court to make orders that the respondent shall not use or threaten to use violence against the applicant and that the respondent shall not use, or threaten to use, violence against a child of the family. Moreover, the court has power to require the offending spouse to leave the matrimonial home or prohibit him from entering the matrimonial home and as additional protection the court may where it considers that the injury is likely to occur again attach a power of arrest to the order whereby the violent spouse may be arrested without warrant by any police officer for any suspected breach of the court's order.

In this way, the Charter reinforces the principle of equality and seeks to restore the dignity and respect of the person with the husband-wife relationship whenever violence occurs in that relationship.

Singapore women suffer discrimination in certain respects e.g. A Singapore man has more freedom in choosing a wife. He may marry a foreign women and set up his matrimonial home in Singapore. His wife can obtain citizenship by registration fairly easily after 2 years of continuous residence, while a foreign husband of a Singapore women can only become a Singapore citizen by naturalization, i.e. among other things, he needs to stay in Singapore for not less than 10 out of the 12 years preceding his application.

Citizenship for offspring by descent occurs only if the father is a Singapore citizen.

A husband may claim personal relief from income tax for his wife but not vice-versa.

The equalization process in Singapore seems to be the result of women's active participation in production and the economic development of the country.

Prostitution and problems of migrant women are a matter of special concern.

Hong Kong

A married women in Hong Kong suffers discrimination as there is no community of property and no value is given to the contribution made by a woman in looking after the home and the children.

Although an executive officer is entitled to housing subsidy, a married woman in the same rank is excluded from participation in housing schemes, nor can she enjoy the benefit of living quarters or housing benefits, even if she is willing to make the necessary contributions.

Her husband and children are excluded from Government medical and dental services, even if she is prepared to pay the charges. No education subsidies are available to her children, whether in Hong Kong or in United Kingdom.

Her husband receives no Government travelling allowance to visit her, if she is sent abroad on a training course. A male officer's wife can visit him with passage paid by the Government, if he goes on a fourteen-week course and if she stays for over three weeks with him.

Since a women is awarded equal pay she pays the same tax on her income as her male counterparts. But she is excluded from the established "fring benefits" that come with the job.

During marriage, her husband could obtain a passport, take the child, and go abroad without her consent, but she could not do so without his consent, not even to Macau.

There is no paid maternity leave in Hong Kong.

Republic of Korea

Korea has been under the influence of Confucion tradition which demands obedience from woman to man as a father, husband or son.

"This Confucian thought exercised a fundamental and powerful influence on the Korean family system. Highest significance was given to the continuation of the blood line through the males. The "head of the household" system which requires that every household be headed by the first son (even though he might be only a one-month-old baby) perpetuates the concept that men are naturally superior to women. If by chance there were no son in a family, one would be adopted in order to have a male to inherit the headship and continue that family's line.

The head of the family had all authority and control over the rest of the family; sons were more highly esteemed than daughters; the husband had precedence over his wife; and a father had a higher status than a mother."

The Civil Code of the Republic of Korea, 1960, and the revision of the Family Law in 1979 reduced the area of discrimination against Korean women. Certain inadequacies, however, still exist. Dr. Tai-Young Lee and her associates inter alia, argue that:

(1) The boundary of relatives should be the same for both husband's and wife's family, namely that all with four degrees of blood ties should be considered relatives.

(2) The system of prohibition of marriage between persons of the same name and same place of family origin should be abolished.

(3) In case of divorce, either partner should have the right to petition for division of their common property. In addition, recognition should be given to the value of the wife's work in the household as contributing to common investments.

(4) The existing system of the head of the family should be abolished.

One provision, however, in Dr. Tai-Young Lee's paper is of particular interest. Among the changes which were made in June 1960, she has mentioned a change which roads as follows: "Succession through the maternal line was recognized. That is to say, when there is no son, a daughter may continue the family line and in such a case, if she marries, her husband is registered in her family register and their children take the mother's family name and clan origin".

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This raises the question as to whether the return to matriarchical system will be the answer to achieve rights for women. The subjugation of women is said to have become worse under the Patriarchal system which still prevails.

Thailand

The status of women in Thailand before the Civil and Commercial Code Book V, 1976, was pitiable. Polygamy was prevalent. A husband had the right to beat his wife who could not fight back and if she did, she had to salute him with flowers in apology. The marriage could be terminated by the man cutting a pole of his house and walking away. Bigamy was not a crime. Prostitution is a problem in Thailand as it is in almost every country of this region.

The Code attempted to give women equal rights with men. It is, however, compulsory for the married woman to use the married surname even now; woman is also discriminated in the matter of divorce if mutual agreement is not reached in respect of divorce. The first ground for divorce status, "when a husband adopts or takes care of another woman as his wife or when a wife commits adultery, the other party is eligible to file a case for divorce". Asst. Prof. Tipchanok Ratanosoth in her paper, "Positive Glances at Thai Women's Rights" views this inequality thus: "the legislative body understands men's behaviour far too well that they always have the inclination for commiting adultery. So if the law happens to say that commitment of adultery by a husband is enough to be a cause for a divorce, all husbands would be busy spending most of their days in the court than at home. Women then should try to conceive that this section of the law simply recognizes women's virtue much higher than that of the opposite sex".

Malaysia

In Malaysia, prior to the coming into force in 1982 of the Law Reform (Marriage and Divorce) Act 1976 the marriage systems were in a chaotic state. Each ethnic group had its own set of rules, regulations and customs pertaining to marriage and divorce or they could opt to be subjected to the statutory law, which however was itself confusing.

In Peninsular Malaysia alone there were four different statutes governing marriage and divorce. These were the Civil Marriage Ordinance, the Registration of Marriage Ordinance, the Christian Marriage Ordinance, and the Divorce Ordinance, all of 1952.

The present Act applies to all persons domiciled in Malaysia with the exception of Muslims, the natives of Sabah and Sarawak and the Aborigines of Peninsular Malaysia. However, the two latter groups may opt to marry under the Act in which case they would also have to seek matrimonial relief under the same Act.

This Act provides for the usual provisions as to minimum age, consent and formalities. The fundamental difference will be that all marriages whether celebrated at the Registry of Marriages, Churches, Temples etc. will be monogamous.

The ground for divorce under the Act is the irretrievable breakdown of the marriage. If a husband and wife mutually agree that the marriage should be dissolved, they may after the expiration of two years from the date of their marriage present a joint petition for a divorce to the courts.

Section 76 empowers the court to order division of the property acquired during the marriage by the joint efforts of both parties. Even if the property is acquired through the sole effort of one party, the court can order division of the property except that the party by whose effort the assets were acquired shall receive a greater proportion.

A reconciliation machinery has been provided under the Act; the fact that many of the reliefs cannot be asked for until reconciliation process is over may cause hardship.

Women are discriminated in matters of inheritance, they are entitled to maintenance through Court process. The father is the natural guardian.

Indonesia

The marriage systems in Indonesia have been influenced by religion on the one hand and custom or "Adat" on the other. This has from time immemorial come under the influence of many religions, such as Hinduism, Buddhism, Christianity and Islam.

Kinship patterns affect the family and social lives of Indonesians outside the cities and towns. To the extent that adat law is grounded on the customs of such kinship groups and is the law generally used in family matters, these kinship patterns still affect the status of women in some particulars. Kinship patterns can exercise an important influence on a woman's position in marriage, particularly with regard to control of property and inheritance rights.

/Kinship

Kinship groups are either patrilineal, matrilineal, unilateral or combination or choice of the lines of descent: "bilateral", "parental", "double unilateral", or "alternating unilateral".

The woman's position as wife and mother is usually subordinate to the husband's, even in the home.

In bilateral or parental communities, the husband and wife each belong to their own kinship group, and the children belong to the kinship groups of both parents. The woman's position in such a system is usually equal to the man's and it is this system that is the most common in Indonesia.

The Marriage Law of 1974 to a great extent imposed unity and consistency upon the customary marriage laws, and has been important in improving the legal status of women. Suits under the Marriage Law of 1974 and involving Moslems are tried by the Religious Court (Pengadilan Agama); those of other religions have their cases heard in the General Court (Pengadilan Negeri). The Negeri must also confirm the decisions of the Agama.

Article 31 of the Marriage Law states that the rights and obligations of the wife are equivalent to those of the husband with regard to both the marital relationship and the couple's relationship to society. Article 34, however, states that the husband is obligated to support his wife to the best of his abilities, while the wife is obligated to maintain the household. The law thus makes the husband the head of the household and the wife the homemaker.

Polygamy is only allowed when the wife has a physical disability or disease, or is infertile or unable to fulfil her sexual duties to such an extent that the marriage is threatened. In polygamous situations, the husband must support both wives and promise fair treatment of both.

The grounds for divorce are the same for either party. Inheritance rights differ according to which law is applicable: adat, Islamic, or Civil Code law. There has been discussion of adopting a unified inheritance law throughout Indonesia, but this has yet to evolve. The present position, however, is uncertain and complex. Generally, under adat law spouses are not heirs to each others estate; the estate passes directly to the children.

Because the Indonesian population is overwhelmingly Islamic, adat law has absorbed some of Islam's legal precepts.

/The Philippines

The Philippines

The Philippines has a legal system derived from the Roman Civil Law, English Common Law, Islamic Law, the Canon law of the Roman Catholic Church, as well as customs which have survived centuries of colonial rule.

During pre-Spanish times, the Filipino women occupied a high position in society. Monogamy was generally observed except in the Muslim area. Marriages were arranged by the parents but the bridegroom was charged with bringing the dowry or "bigaykaya" to the marriage. This could take the form of money or a piece of land and services rendered to the girl's family. After marriage, she retained her maiden name, was treated as an equal by her husband and had a say, not only in domestic but also in state affairs. She could succeed to sultanates, particularly where male heirs were wanting. Divorce was allowed and could be obtained by women.

Under the Spanish rule (1521-1898) and the influence of Catholic Church, women in Philippines became essentially homemakers and gradually lost almost all rights. In law, the status of women was assimilated to that of the minor child and those who were incapacitated like idiots and lunatics. Even if financially endowed, a married woman had no right to manage or dispose of her properties without the consent of her husband.

With the victory of the Americans in the Spanish-American war of 1898, the spread of education and democracy, social, political and economic restrictions on women were eased. The constitution declared that the State shall afford protection to labour, especially to working women and minors.

Maternity leave with pay, granted by legislation, evidently a concept that was premature in the '20s was, however, declared unconstitutional by the Supreme Court on the ground that it violated the principle on non-impairment of the obligation of contracts, but the right was subsequently incorporated into law, thus rendering the earlier decision of no effect.

Filipino women obtained right to vote in 1937 after they fulfilled conditions that this right would be granted to women if "in a plebiscite which shall be held for that purpose within two years after the adoption of this Constitution, not less than three hundred thousand women possessing the necessary qualifications shall vote affirmatively on the question". The plebiscite rewarded the women's intensive campaign with an overwhelming 447,725 votes.

The Civil Code of the Philippines, applies to the family relations of non-Muslims; while Muslims are governed by the Code of Muslim Personal Laws of the Philippines, based on the Quran. 69 per cent of all marriages in the Philippines are contracted through religious ceremony, 31 per cent by civil authority.

/The

The legal requirements pertaining to consent, legal capacity, (Age and prohibitory degrees etc.) are common to marriages in all countries but they are of particular significance to Philippines where divorce is not permitted and marriages are either dissolved through annulment or legal separation.

The consent of the parties freely given is required since marriage is a juridical act safeguarded by law. (Child marriages are alien to Filipino custom and culture.) Where consent is vitiated by violence, intimidation or fraud, the marriage may be annulled. The State may dissolve the marriage through annulment only upon such grounds recognized by law and existing at the time of marriage.

While the Catholic Church grants annulments by a declaration of the nullity of the marriage due to specified grounds, the State does not recognize them. Indeed, this is an area which constitutes a major irritant in the relationship between the Roman Catholic Church and the State in view of the numerous Catholics who successfully obtain Church annulments and subsequently contract other marriages, which however lack validity in the eyes of the law.

As marriage is not only a Church sacrament or a contract but a vital civil institution, the law requires a permit for religious officials to solemnize marriages. So important is this State authority that a marriage performed by one not authorized by law is without legal effect, regardless of the good faith or ignorance of the contracting parties. Marriages are required to be registered in the Civil Registrar.

A Muslim is, however, permitted limited polygamy under the Muslim Law. It is still the general attitude that marriage lends respectability to a union and there has been an appreciable increase in the number of marriages. The offspring of extra-marital relations being illegitimate, are not be entitled to such rights as bearing the name of the father and receiving their lawful share of the parent's inheritance. This stigma still attaches to illegitimate children.

The husband, as head of the family, is responsible for the support of his wife and children, while the wife manages the affairs of the household. Both jointly exercise parental authority over their offspring but in case of disagreement, the father's decision shall prevail, unless there is a judicial order to the contrary.

The husband is the administrator of the conjugal properties, although he may voluntarily transfer this power to his wife or the court may divest him of it for justifiable reasons. In practice, however, the wife holds the pursestrings.

A 1950 amendment to the Civil Code empowered a wife to own, administer, mortgage or dispose of her separate or paraphernal property without having to secure the consent of her husband. The husband generally decides the residence of the family. The wife may exercise any profession or occupation or engage in business. However, the husband may object provided his income is sufficient for the family, according to its social standing, and his opposition is founded on serious and valid grounds.

The wife cannot, without the husband's consent, acquire or receive any gift except from her family or very close relatives. Inasmuch as the wife is not the administrator of the conjugal properties, she cannot perform any act which would automatically make such properties accountable, unless with her husband's consent. When her husband dies, she does not automatically exercise his rights and powers as administrator of the minor children's properties. For this purpose, she has to secure the court's approval.

The disparity in her position vis-à-vis her husband becomes more pronounced when a spouse desires to end the marriage. While adultery on the part of the wife is a ground for divorce, it is concubinage on the part of the husband, which may be committed by the husband keeping a mistress in the conjugal dwelling or when he engages in sexual intercourse under scandalous circumstances with a woman other than his wife, or where he cohabits with her in another place.

Since the grounds for legal separation are restrictive, it invariably happens that the husband acquires another woman and sets up a second family.

Divorces obtained abroad by desperate married couples are not recognised.

Papua New Guinea

The Constitution of the independent State of Papua New Guinea encompasses the ideal for the rights of women in the State. The broad guidelines for the rights of women in marriage are stated by the National Goals and Directive Principles which underlie the Constitution.

National Goal and Directive Principle 2(12) states:

> Recognition of the principle that a complete relationship in marriage rests upon equality of rights and duties of the partners and that responsible parenthood is based on that equality.

Since 1964, people in Papua New Guinea have had the choice of entering marriage according to custom under Section 55 of the Marriage Act 1963 (No. 84 of 1964), or by a non-customary, western-style ceremony as set out in part IV of the Marriage Act 1963, ss. 28-54. Both forms of marriage are equally valid and effectual under Section 55(2) of the Marriage Act 1963.

Papua New Guinea is an example of a society where women for generations have been seen as mothers, the quiet strength of kinship groups governed by varied tribal marriage systems, suddenly thrown into contact with the West, in some parts for less than 50 years and in that short period, have moved from traditional civilization to a modern one.

In customary marriage systems consent is not the central factor; marriages as in many other parts of Asia are family and kinship associations. Child betrothals, in which the child involved cannot give informed consent, also occur in many societies, as does polygamy in which consent by the first wife or wives is largely irrelevant.

Western law has superimposed consent as a pre-requisite for a valid customary marriage. In Papua New Guinea, customary polygamous marriages are valid under s.55 of the Marriage Act 1963.

The Law Reform Commission has recommended that the consent of the wife or wives should be obtained before a polygamous marriage may be entered. If all parties are in agreement, the parties should be free to marry polygamously.

Due to the dual system of marriage in Papua New Guinea, there is also a dual system of divorce. However, the individuals are not at liberty to choose the form of divorce. The customary laws and attitudes on dissolution of marriage throughout the country are extremely disparate.

/Divorce

Divorce is a matter affecting the whole community, not just the two individuals who were parties to the original marriage, since divorce can also dissolve the relationships between two kin groups.

The problems involved in establishing whether a customary divorce has been obtained are as complex as those in proving customary marriage as there is no formal ceremony associated with divorce. According to McRae, the overwhelming majority of Papua New Guineans conduct their matrimonial affairs in accordance with customary law.

Mistreatment, Wife Returning to Kin, Adultery are some of the main grounds for customary divorce. The hearing of divorce proceedings is unfair to women as it is not accepted that a women should offend her male partner by speaking in public and being more knowledgeable than him, the hearings in many of these societies are in public where men make speeches.

Dissolution of Non-Customary Marriage is based on the "matrimonial fault" theory. The extremely high cost of divorce under the present law makes divorce an impossibility for many Papua New Guineans married under Part IV of the Marriage Act, i.e. the Western style marriage.

Japan

In Japan the Civil Code as revised in 1947 based on the constitution of the 1946 provided women with equality in every possible right resulting in changes in the way of living and pattern of family life. There is complete equality in the matter of marriage, property rights, divorce, parental rights over children in Japan. The Family Court machinery is available for mediation where the partners fail to come to an agreement. The marriages must be registered.

There is no institution of alimony, but a woman (or man), when divorced, may demand distribution of property from the husband (or the wife), though the actual amount of such distribution is generally very small because the husbands are seldom in possession of much property.

In 1976, the Civil Code was amended to give women the right to continue to use the married surname, on application within three months

/after

after the divorce, without consent of the other party to the marriage. "Prior to this amendment, persons who had changed their surname upon marriage, in most cases women, were required to resume their previous surname after divorce."

The 'name' controversy has been raging for some time. Women have at times insisted on using their maiden surnames either because they are attached to the name or to assort symbolic independence from men. Demands are often made for legislation giving women the right to choose their names, citizenship, domicile, place of residence or nationality. These rights do not exist in many countries of this region.

In spite of the changing patterns of family life, it became evident in a recent opinion survey undertaken by the Prime-Minister's office in Japan, that traditional attitudes to traditional role patterns still prevail.

The new Civil Code provides for the joint inheritance of the children, both male and female, in equal shares, and the wife always has the right to inherit her husband's property, regardless of whether or not he has left a will.

In recent years the decreased birth rate, increase in the life expectancy, the availability of modern household appliances have effected further changes in family life. Women have been spared much of the time and energy spent on their house work with the result that the number of married women who want to undertake gainful work has increased. About half of all married women are in the labour force and 6 out of 10 married women workers have children under 18 years of age. One out of 5 have children under 6 years of age.

In 1981, there were 22,487 day nurseries all over the country which accommodate about 2 million children under 6 years of age. However, a new problem for women has arisen from such a situation: how to successfully combine their family responsibilities with their working life.

/The two

The two factors, a high divorce rate and an increase in the number of nuclear families are causing instability in family life.

Australia

There is complete legal equality in the matter of family law in Australia.

Since the Family Law Act was introduced in 1975, the only ground for divorce (available to both men and women) is that "the marriage has irretrievably broken down", conclusive evidence of which depends on proof that "the parties have lived separately and apart for a period of 12 months".

The only restrictions on the freedom of movement of women and equality are those inherent in and incidental to the continued traditional role pattern of men and women. The inadequacies in law are not of major substantive laws but those which are discovered in the process of implementation of the laws. It appears that pressures arise to remedy these situations when they become apparent.

The existence of Family Courts and numerous other bodies, for example, the Sex Discrimination Boards, the Commissioner for equal opportunity in South Australia under the Sex Discrimination Act, 1975, the presence of Advisors on women in state and federal governments help in this process.

Defacto marriages are not covered by the Family Law Act, nor are their children. These depend instead on the operation of a variety of individual state laws, under which mothers usually retain custody of children, and can sometimes prove paternity and obtain maintenance for children. Where property claims depend on establishing financial contributions or other factors, the area of common law applies and there have been frequent calls for a code to be introduced to render these rights more rational and consistent. There is no right to "Palimony" in Australia.

/Australia

Australia, like Japan, has to counter problems which are common to developed and prosperous countries such as violence against women, sexual harrassments and high divorce rate which led Daphne A. Kok, the President of the International Federation of Women Layers, to say in her paper on "Women and Law", that, "The law has always enforced monogamy, although the relative case with which divorce is obtained by either husband or wife since 1975, would cause one to describe the present situation as 'serial monogamy'. The Australia situation perhaps requires efforts which will preserve the family, the basic unit of society until an alternative is found.

Elsewhere in the Region

Buddhism has affected the marriage system and laws of Burma where women have been treated favourably and have throughout history enjoyed almost equal freedom with men and have been free from many fetters that bound them in ancient and medieval India. The traditional role pattern restrictions however continue.

Marriages by customary traditions are encouraged to be monogamous in Bhutan. Widow remarriage is permitted. The dowry system or the bride price is not prevalent. Women have equality with men in the social, political and economic life of the nation.

There is no fixed procedure for divorce as it is rare. It is fair and flexible depending on the facts of each case. Both during marriage and after dissolution of marriage, the husband and wife have equal share in the property.

The People's Republic of China by its Constitution and the Marriage Law of the People's Republic of China 1980 has stated as its objective complete equality with men. The Marriage Law of China is a very comprehensive piece of legislation touching almost all aspects of marriage, family, divorce, family planning and the status of women. Essentially this enactment treats women as separate individual human beings and gives them equal status with men.

Women have the same rights as men in Kampuchea. Marriage is monogamous and divorce can be obtained by parties by mutual consent. Women have equal shares in the property of the husband with the exception that a widow gets a share if she has children. The practice of alimony does not exist. Widow remarriage is allowed and in fact the state encourages large families.

In Laos women have equal rights with men in matters of family law. The nuclear pattern of families exists. The man is, however, the pater of family in all respects within the family and represents the family outside the home.

Viet Nam is one of the few countries which has a provision relating to marriage and family in its constitution and it has granted legislative equality to women in matters of marriage, divorce, and rights over the children.

III. A proper prospective on marriage may help preserve marriage. The fact that marriage, a very ancient institution has servived to this day speaks of its inherent strength. Marriage in the traditional sense is an alliance for life between a woman and a man which has been given socio-legal recognition or status and which involves rights and obligations to each other and society as a whole.

Marriage is in fact a union of body, mind and soul (some prefer to call the emotional and feeling part of human personality consciousness) of a woman and a man for life which makes it imperative that such a union is between equals who are free and who have deep affection and respect for each other.

True marriage results in a delicate, sensitive, beautiful and creative relationship which is akin to that of God and his creation, of mother and child and which has to be nurtured with great care and tenderness.

F.W. Robertson has rightly said that

> "there is no earthly relationship which has so much power to ennoble and to exalt. There are two rocks, in this world of ours, on which the soul must either anchor or be wrecked - the one is God, and the other is the sex opposite",

The intensity of misery, bitterness and wretchedness of a marriage turned sour can be immense. Married women suffer tremendous discrimination in employment in every country of this region or for that matter throughout the world. The very act of procreation without which the world will not exist creates disabilities to her.

Many countries of this region have enacted equal remuneration Acts in accord with the international mandate but those have been counter productive because the employers prefer to employ men as they do not

wish to lose working hours which become necessary as women have to take maternity leave or leave for other collatoral - reasons. Existing role patterns dictate that it is the woman who takes leave to look after the home and the children in emergencies.

Innumerable cases of discrimination make it clear that there is need for detailed regulations, both in the organized and unorganised sectors of employment. Further a strong implementation machinery is required to effectively implement the 'equal pay for equal work' concept. A plan for lucrative part time employment for women may be considered, besides there is need for flexibility in implementation of rules.

The provision of facilities is not enough; the education and training of the couples to understand the new role patterns and needs of each other is necessary.

The customs, e.g. arranged marriage system in some countries when a women becomes an object of display to be chosen, the Purdah System, Seclusion of women and ethnic heritage reflected in daily living habits, beliefs even superstitions make the position of women vulnerable particularly in the patriarchal system.

The major customs and practices which persist in spite of legal prohibitions and which have been exercising the minds of the workers for women's welfare are: the customs of Dowry with the evil consequences of torture, cruelties even deaths; child marriages; isolation of widows; the Devdasi system by which young girls, sometimes even children are dedicated to temples-another form of prostitution; prostitution itself (which is now regulated in some countries for medical reasons) and wife beating, so frequent both in the West and East and brutal that it is a practice which has led to the need for setting up of refuge or shelter homes.

The discriminatory administrative policy against married women is exhibited when a married woman in India is denied allotment of separate chamber to practice law or a separate plot because she is married. Another example is the refusal in Hong Kong to make the wife a joint tenant in a flat, when if she were just living with a man she would be entitled to these facilities.

The varied and colourful ceremonies of marriages of different countries present the most charming aspect of marriage, and also reflect

the culture and social behaviour of the people. Marriage is a happy occasion, which is looked forward to, by not only the couple but their families and their relations who all get together particularly in the rural areas where majority of the people in this region live. The special marriage songs and dances, the fun and frolic around the couple makes them feel like a king and a queen for a day. The head dress worn by the bridal couples in many countries resambles a crown.

These beautiful ceremonies, a part of the cultural heritage, ought not however become meaningless rituals, a financial burden or a source of irritation and nuisance.

The strategies used by the various countries of the Asian and Pacific Region to remedy the situation have brought relief to individuals but not succeeded in revamping the marriage systems. Japan has progressed considerably in Logislative activity and its implementation.

The realisation that the state must come to the aid of women to remedy the imbalance in employment has led to legislations and provision of facilities, e.g. maternity leave, nurseries, tax benefits and other incentives to employers.

In Japan in 1975, a law was promulgated making it mandatory that replacement be found for women teachers taking pregnancy leave. In order to protect motherhood as well as to maintain the regular classes. Child care leave which assured continuity of service, which women in Britain have been demanding, has been legislated in Japan on July 3, 1975, but it seems it has not been made applicable to all women.*

Japan is one of the few countries to extend social insurance laws to women and provide for industrial framework law. Japan has planned action for the decade for women.

Australia has evolved various modalities for implementation of equal rights granted to women and in the process discovered many discriminatory practices against women and men. Constant evaluation of laws prejudicial to women is being carried out in Australia.

/In

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* Denmark has started schools for educating couples and preparing them for equal role patterns.

In consonance with the concept that protection discriminates while participation liberates, the protective laws are being replaced by legislation which give greater opportunity of work in areas which were not open earlier to women, for example, underground mining. The I.L.O. Convention No. 111 has been under criticism in this respect.

The Indonesian Institution of Consultation and Legal Aid for Women and Family has located its office in one of the most beautiful mosques in Jakarta; the purpose is to consolidate the family relationship. Nani Yamin quotes Khalil Gibran in 'The Prophet' : 'Then Almitra spoke again and said, "And what of marriage, Master?" And he answered saying, "You were born together and together you will be forever more. You shall be together when the white wings of death scatter your days. Aye, you shall be togehter in the silence of God".

The ideology and stress on economic advancement has brought about equality for women in the communist Republic of China, Kampuchea, Viet Nam, Laos, Mongolia, etc.

The participation of women in socio-economic activities of the nation has helped countries like Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand etc. to achieve factual equality in some spheres.

The Korea Legal Aid Centre for Family Relations started by Dr. Tai-Young Lee, the first women lawyer in South Korea, has helped, in 25 years till 1981, 150,000 women, one by one.

India is the only country in this region to use the strategy of Public Interest Litigation for getting relief for women through court process. Several cases of dowry and rape victims have been filed in which favourable orders have been obtained.

In two recent cases where the personal laws of the Christian women were challenged the Supreme Court issued notice to the State to show cause why these laws should not be stuck down.

In one case a Syrian Christian woman was denied equal rights in intestate succession. In the other under the Indian Divorce Act 1869, a Christian man could obtain divorce on the ground of adultery while a woman who sought divorce had to prove "incestuous" adultery, on the part of the husband.

The Courts in India and other countries have helped remove discrimination against women whenever cases have been brought before them. The Government of India has now accepted to establish the Family Court in India. Its infrastructure is being worked out and several models are being studied including the Australian model.

There is an activist women's movement in India, as in other parts of this region. Women have been stirred and are no longer willing to accept an unequal status in or out of marriage. For the first time in the history of women, concerted efforts are being made to accept a woman as a separate human being with a name and an identity, a personality and a dignity of her own, who will not only be loved by her children but also respected by them. She has to be recognised as such for her own sake and not for the sake of the world at large. She is a human being with the faults, virtues and feelings of a human being. She is neither a goddess nor dull drab, drudge, doll nor an inferior obedient slave of man. She has been that too long.

"Many more miles have to be covered", "many more mountains to be climbed", many more activist actions to be taken but nothing can stop the forward march of women now and the objectives set by the International Decade for women will be achieved. But in order to achieve them in the shortest possible time an activist action plan of law reform and strategies to be prepared by the international community with recommendation for its adoption by member nations of United Nations is an essential first step.

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EFFECTS OF WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN INDUSTRY ON MARRIAGE AND FAMILY LIFE

(Item 5 (b) of the provisional agenda)

THE IMPACT OF WOMEN'S EMPLOYMENT ON HOUSEHOLDS AND FAMILY LIFE

Paper prepared by Dr. Virginia A. Miralao, Research Associate, Institute of Philippine Culture, Ateneo de Manila University.

This paper has not been formally edited. The views expressed in it are those of the author and do not reflect those of the United Nations.

The Impact of Women's Employment on Households and Family Life

Much has been written on the changing roles of women in recent years. But while conceptualizations on women's roles underscore the complex interrelationships between and among multi-level changes in economic and social structures, household conditions, and women's activities, data and other methodological limitations constrain research to focus on only a few aspects of these relationships at a time. On the whole, research has tended to focus more on the factors influencing women's entry and participation in male activity domains, and particularly, in paid labor activities outside of the home. This research focus on the determinants of women's labor force activity appears to have been prompted by the need to look into the factors accounting for the recent increases in female employment in many Asian countries, and especially, in East and Southeast Asia where these increases have been most remarkable. It may also have been prompted by the general sentiment that women's participation in economic activities is in itself a good thing, so that research on its determinants could feed into the formulation of policies that would encourage women's entry into paid work.

Considerably less systematic attention has been given the consequences of women's employment on households and family life, although it may precisely be in this area where knowledge may contribute to better informed policy options on the integration of women in economic activities, and in the development process in general. First, given the persistence of traditional sex-role ideologies that give pre-eminence to women's domestic roles, development planners may continue to doubt the wisdom of more vigorously promoting women's outside employment owing to anticipated disruptive effects of this on child care, husband-wife relations, and the general household welfare. Hence, the need for empirically grounded information on the household impacts of women's employment. Second, it is argued that the enhancement of women's status requires not only measures that address their economic or income-earning roles but also those intended to minimize women's displacement from work, or those meant to increase productivity in occupations with large concentrations of female workers. The enhancement of women's status also requires understanding of the impact of women's economic activity on intra-household relations and situations, to better identify the kinds of social support that would allow women to gain their rightful share of economic and other socially productive activities.

The little attention given the micro-level or household consequences of women's employment is partly a consequence of the conceptual and methodological difficulties in disentangling cause and effect relationships in the analysis of women's employment and household conditions.[1] But because women's income-earning activities are closely intertwined with the activities they do at home, current research, though oriented

towards investigating the determinants and the changing nature of women's employment, has inevitably touched on their household conditions. It is the purpose of this paper to draw from and highlight the existing findings on the implications of women's labor force activity for their households and families. In particular, it focuses on the housheold impacts of women's absorption into modern-sector occupations where the conditions of work--e.g. away from home, at regular hours, with cash earnings, and under more bureaucratic structures--represent a break from their traditional involvement as workers on family farms and other family-owned enterprises. Various formulations relating socio-economic change processes and sex roles suggest that the large-scale entry of women into modern sector employment would force certain alterations in gender relations, and in the manner in which workplace as well as homes are organized.[2]

Trends in Women's Employment

To appreciate the magnitudes and significance of Asian women's employment, a brief review of current trends may be appropriate at this point. With the exception of the newly industrializing countries of the region (S. Korea, Taiwan, Hongkong and Singapore), agriculture claims the higher proportion of economically active women in most countries, although the pursuit of industrialization goals by Asian countries indicate the non-agricultural sectors to be the growth employment poles for both men and women. The selected female labor force statistics presented in Table 1 provide some indication of how women's entry into modern sector jobs has been proceeding. First, data on the female labor

force participation rates (Table 1a) in the urban areas of East and Southeast Asian countries show urban female activity rates to range from 27.7% in Indonesia to a high 54.5% in Thailand. The urban female participation rate in Thailand, as well as those of Hongkong, Singapore, and Malaysia exhibit levels (over 44%) comparable to observed female activity rates in industrialized countries; and while those of Taiwan, the Philippines and Indonesia are lower, their current levels show improvements over those reported for earlier years (26.7% in Taiwan in 1970; 33.7% in the Philippines in 1970; and 25.5% in Indonesia in 1971). Second, women are also shown to hold substantial shares of total urban employment (Table 1b) in many countries of the region. Women hold over two-fifths of all urban jobs in Thailand, over a third in Singapore, the Philippines, Hongkong, and Taiwan, and over a fourth of all urban jobs in Indonesia. Finally, data on the percentage female in the non-agricultural workforce show women to have made substantial inroads in three non-agricultural sectors: namely, manufacturing, trade, and services work (although it should be noted that women's involvement in trade is of long standing in Southeast Asian countries). The figures shown in Table 1c show the percentage female of the manufacturing workforce in the Asian countries to be generally higher than that of industrialized countries, where women constitute a lower 26 to 37% of the manufacturing workforce. The proportions female in trade (generally over 30%) and services industries (also over 30%) in the Asian countries are likewise comparable to the proportions female observed in the West. It is only in the areas of financing, insurance and business services, and

Table 1. Selected female labor force statistics, East and Southeast Asian countries, and some Western countries.

A. Labor Force Participation Rates for Females in Urban Areas

East and Southeast		Western Countries	
South Korea (1970)	26.3	Japan	44.0
Taiwan (1974)	28.1	Australia (1980)	44.7
Hongkong (1976)	45.4	USA (1970)	41.4
Singapore (1980)	44.2	France (1975)	42.6
Malaysia (1979)	45.0		
Thailand (1979)	54.5		
Philippines (1980)	36.0		
Indonesia (1980)	27.7		

B. Women's Share of Total Urban Employment

South Korea (1970)	40.1
Taiwan (1981)	34.0
Hongkong (1970)	33.7
Singapore (1980)	34.4
Malaysia (1970)	26.2
Thailand (1979)	42.4
Philippines (1975)	37.6
Indonesia (1980)	28.8

C. Females as % of Workforce in Non-agricultural Industries

East and Southeast Asia	Manuf.	Const.	Trade	Transp. & Commu.	Financing Insu., Bus. Service	Comm. Social Personal Services
Republic of Korea	38.1	4.9	48.2	10.0	24.2	32.2
Taiwan	42.3	8.4	36.8	13.2	36.4	40.5
Hongkong	46.1	5.9	25.9	8.5	31.4	38.5
Singapore	40.4	9.2	30.3	14.9	36.4	34.2
Malaysia (Peninsular)	29.0	7.1	18.1	4.2	-	29.7
Thailand	50.2	11.1	52.0	5.0	-	40.0
Philippines	46.9	1.4	57.6	4.9	-	61.0
Indonesia	42.2	3.1	47.5	1.7	15.5	31.8
Western Countries						
Japan	36.5	13.2	44.7	12.3	45.1	43.2
Australia	25.7	5.0	41.8	15.6	43.5	49.5
U.S.A	30.4	6.2	44.5	24.5	52.9	56.1

Source: Jones, Gavin. Economic growth and changing female employment structure in the city of Southeast and EastAsia. Paper presented at the Conference on Women in the Urban and Industrial Workforce of Southeast and East Asia, Manila 1982.

in transport, storage and communications work that the shares of Western women exceed those of their Asian counterparts. Expectedly however, in the NIC's of the region, the proportions female in these latter sectors also come close to approximating those of Western countries.

This is not to imply that the status of Asian women with regards employment is now similar to the status of women workers in the West. Outside of the aforementioned comparabilities in the proportions of employed women in various non-agricultural sectors, the nature and conditions of women's work even in designated "modern-sector" occupations differ considerably in Asian and Western countries. Asian and Western country-differences in cultures are well known, and so are other country differences in the levels and processes of socio-economic development that condition the nature of emerging occupations for women. Hence, in contrast to the more formal and organized trade and services activities of Western women for instance, substantial proportions of the Asian women engaged in trade are found in small-scale and itinerant buy-and-sell operations; while many of those in services are domestic helpers in better-off homes. Similarly, there are indications that the export-led growth strategies of Asian countries translate to the payment of lower wages, the grantingof fewer benefits, and the institutionalization of less than satisfactory working conditions for Asian women,[3] when compared to the wages and conditions of female manufacturing/industrial work in Western countries. Nonetheless, the pursuit of export oriented industrialization policies by Asian countries may be expected to continue to

shape the nature of modern jobs available to the region's women; which in turn, may differ not only from the modern jobs of Western women, but also from the traditional economic activities that women in Asia have been doing. The manufacture of garments, electronic components, shoes, toys and other goods as a consequence of export promotion account for increasing proportions of female employment in Asian countries with no strong cultural barriers on women's employment (e.g. Thailand and the Philippines); as well as in Taiwan and Indonesia with more salient cultural restrictions on women's participation in wage employment.

The Household Impacts of Women's Modern Sector Employment

Information on the household impacts of women's paid employment may be drawn from the findings of various women-related studies, and a few other studies that focused on the topic. Particularly useful are those that have looked into the demographic effects of women's employment, and the household determinants of women's labor force participation. A review of these findings shows Asian women's employment in modern sector jobs to have had important consequences on household welfare and other aspects of family organization.

Demographic Impacts. The early studies on the demographic impacts of Asian women's employment, undertaken in the 1960s out of a concern of the growing imbalance of population and economic growth rates, generally yielded insufficient evidence to support the contention that wives' employment results in fewer children. This absence of a

systematic relationship between women's employment and fertility in Asian and other Third World countries was attributed to the slow absorption of women in modern sector jobs, and their continued employment in traditional farm and family work that made it convenient for them to attend to both economic activity and housework.[4] However, the results of studies that analyzed family size by the nature of women's jobs (as against the simple labor market status of wives) were more in line with expectations, and showed relatively clear-cut differences in the number of children borne by women engaged in modern work, when compared to those in traditional occupations, or to those out of the labor force. Illustrating these employment-related fertility differentials are the results of the analysis of the 1978 World Fertility Survey data for several Asian countries.[5] With the exception of Pakistan, Table 2 shows women in non-family work to consistently have fewer children than women in family work, or those not in the labor force. Further, the observed fertility differentials among women in the different employment categories are shown to persist even after controlling for women's education, household incomes and other characteristics that tend to confound the female employment-fertility relationship. Women's employment in modern sector work is found to significantly reduce family size in S. Korea, Malaysia, the Philippines, Bangladesh and Sri-Lanka, but particularly so in Indonesia, where women in modern sector work bear between 1 to 2 children less than non-working wives.

Table 2: Adjusted and unadjusted mean number of children by wife's employment status.

Country	Unadjusted			Adjusted for all Other Variables		
	No Work	Family Work	Non-family Work	No Work	Family Work	Non-family Work
South Korea	4.9	5.3	4.3	5.3	5.0	4.5*
Malaysia	6.1	5.8	5.6	6.2	5.5	5.6*
Thailand	5.0	5.5	4.7	5.5	5.3	5.0
Philippines	6.8	6.2	5.9	6.7	6.1	6.0*
Indonesia	6.3	4.7	4.6	6.1	4.8	4.5**
Bangladesh	6.5	5.6	5.2	6.5	5.7	5.4*
Pakistan	7.0	6.6	6.9	7.0	6.6	6.9
Sri Lanka	5.4	5.4	4.6	5.4	5.2	4.4*

Source: The Socio-economic determinants of human fertility. The Population Division, United Nations 1980.

*significant at .05

**significant at .01

Women's modern sector work has also been reported to make independent contributions to the delays in the age at marriage in some Asian countries, thus contributing to further potential reductions in family size. But recent studies of women workers in Free Trade Zones in the Philippines, Indonesia, and Taiwan report that the women workers' isolation from their families (many being migrants from rural areas) sometimes leads them to early unions or formal marriages.[6] Further analysis of

their actual fertility performance and family size expectations however, show them to have and to expect significantly fewer children than comparable groups in the female population. These findings from recent studies on Asian female manufacturing workers also generally lend credence to the depressing effect of women's modern sector work on marital fertility.

To sum up, the demographic effects of Asian women's employment are in keeping with the role-conflict and the new household economics conceptualizations of women's paid employment as creating hiatuses in women's domestic and income-earning roles, leading them to restrict their number of children. Expectedly, the extent to which this has occurred differs from among the countries of the region, but as in the West, the large-scale entry of women into market work is most likely to contribute to declines in family size. In turn, the reduction in family size holds several positive implications for women and their households, the more obvious of which is the reduction in women's childcare and other housework burdens. Also widely acknowledged are other benefits in the areas of children's health and education, as well as other improvements in household economic ocnditions that come with fewer children and women's market employment.

The Contributions of Employed Wives to Household Cash Incomes.

It is frequently pointed out that women's contributions to national and household economies are undervalued owing to the non-monetization of housework and of women's income-substituting or "production-for consumption" activities. But even when women engage in directly

income-producing activities, their contributions remain underestimated. As in the West, where women's labor contributions to the expansion of textile and other factories in the early stages of industrialization went largely unrecognized,[7] little mention is presently made of Asian women's contributions to national incomes despite their countries' increasing reliance on export/manufacturing industries that depend on female labor. Similarly, within households, the prevailing notion that women's employment is undertaken only to augment family incomes has created the impression that women's incomes are secondary to their husbands'.

Available evidence however would tend to suggest otherwise, or that at least in many instances, women's employment are not simply ancillary sources of household incomes. In assessing women's economic contributions, it is important to take note of findings showing the level of household income to be the most important predictor of women's employment.[8] The poorer the household, the more likely that wives will work, and the longer time they will devote to market activities. And because employed wives tend to come from poorer households (either as a result of the low wages or the unemployment of husbands and other household members), their cash earnings tend to constitute a major portion of their household's income. In female-headed households of course, their contributions are even more crucial as women become their families' sole source of economic support after the death of, or their separation from husbands.

Some indication of the magnitudes of employed women's contributions to total household cash incomes is provided by a status of women survey in the Philippines.[9] Consistent with other study findings, the husbands of employed women in the survey report earning lower wages than the husbands of non-working wives. Further, a comparison of household income sources by wife's employment status (Table 3a) shows the households of employed wives to have more limited sources of income than those of housewives. First, compared to non-working wives, there are more employed wives whose husbands are presently out of work; second, there are also fewer of them who have children who are working; and third, there are fewer of them with other capital sources of income. Once in the labor force however, Table 3b shows the employed wives' earnings to substantially raise average household monthly incomes from ₱820 to ₱1,365,[10] with the husbands' earnings contributing 46.7%, and the wives', a comparable 45% of total household income. While the wives' employment substantially raises their households' incomes, it is to be noted that their households' income levels would have been lower than the current levels observed for the households of non-working wives, had not these women entered employment. It appears therefore that whereas in the aggregate, women command lower wages in the market than men, at the individual household level, their cash earnings come very close to approximating their own husbands' contributions to household incomes.

Other case studies also offer qualitative information on the use and significance of women's earnings in households. A study of female manufacturing workers in a rural subdistrict of Central Java

Table 3. The sources of HH cash incomes and the % contribution of employed household members and other non-wage sources to total HH incomes by wives' labor market status: Urban households, Philippines.

	HH's Housewives N = 466	HH's Employed Wives N =473
A. % of HH's		
with husbands working	88.4%	87.3%
with children working	13.3%	9.3%
with non-wage sources of income	23.8%	17.3%
B. Mean % Contribution of HH Members to Total HH Income		
husbands	78.8%	46.7%
wives	-	45.0%
children	8.1%	3.5%
non-wage sources	12.9%	4.5%
Total	99.8%*	99.7%*
C. Mean Monthly HH Incomes	820.73	1,365.41

*does not add up to 100% because of rounding errors.

Source: Miralao, Virginia A. Women-in-development 3-Region Survey. Institute of Philippine Culture, Ateneo de Manila University, 1983.

for instance, show the women workers (many of whom were single girls from poor households) to contribute cash earnings that are used to buy food, kerosene, soap and other essentials of the households.[11] In relatively better-off Singapore homes, the incomes of many working wives are shown to be used or saved for eventually buying or replacing household

furniture and appliances, or the family's own flat, in addition to helping support siblings and aging parents.[12] Still other accounts report women's cash earnings to go into the education of children or their transfer to better quality schools.[13] Hence, whereas women's earnings in poorer households are crucial in meeting the household's survival needs, their earnings also spell the difference in the attainment or maintenance of improved living conditions or more comfortable lifestyles in many other households.

Maternal Roles. Since the responsibility for children rests mainly with mothers, the mother's involvement in market activity is widely acknowledged to influence the welfare of children. It is also perhaps in the area of child care and mothering, that many fear adverse consequences of women's employment.

On the whole, the expectation that women's employment adversely affects mother's time at child care is supported by time allocation studies, showing employed mothers to devote substantially less time to household activities (childcare included) than full-time housewives. The Philippine status of women survey that specifically looked into the time that mothers with young children (0 to 6 years old) spend at child care found employed mothers to devote about 11 hours less to child care per week than nonworking mothers. Such reductions in employed mothers' child care time may be of particular concern in countries with continuous patterns of female employment (e.g., the Philippines, Thailand, and Malaysia), and with no available child care services. In many other

countries however, as in the NIC's of the region, the burden of child rearing in fact curtails women's market activities, causing many working wives to drop out of the labor force in the peak childbearing years or in the early stages of family formation.[14]

In the area of children's nutrition and health, a household nutritional study in a southern city in the Philippines reports mothers' employment to have countervailing effects on children's nutrition, and for these to differ by social class.[15] In poor income households, mother's employment is seen to result in greater Vitamin A deficiencies among children, owing to the reduction in employed mothers' time in preparing vegetable and Vitamin A-rich dishes for children. Also because of time constraints, the incidence of breastfeeding, as well as of attending nutritional classes and community well-baby clinics is substantially lower among employed mothers than among non-working ones. Other things being equal however, protein and calorie intakes are higher among children of employed than non-working mothers, since the employed mother's income apparently goes to the purchase of foods with these other nutrients. Moreover, the adverse consequences of mother's employment on children's Vitamin A intake and breastfeeding that are noted among lower-income groups, do not hold true in middle-income ones--suggesting again that the employed mother's income is effectively used to buy substitutes for her own milk or other people's services in the preparation of food for the hosuehold. Finally, other evidence do not reveal the reduction in employed mothers' time at child care to necessarily translate to the deteriorating health of children. The Philippine status of women

survey for example shows that given the same levels of household incomes, mother's education, family size, and other characteristics, the incidence of illness among children aged 0 to 6 is still significantly lower among children of employed wives than those of non-working wives.

With regards children's schooling, data from the same status of women survey in the Philippines reveal no relationship between mothers' labor market status and children's enrollment in primary or elementary grades, where attendance in school is close to universal. But at higher educational levels, there are noticeable differences in the proportions of children in high school and college in favor of those with employed mothers. Similar to the relationship between mothers' employment and children's health, employed mothers are shown to contribute to the higher education of their children primarily through their income contributions which then enable their families to afford the expenses for higher schooling. Other than the possible adverse consequence of mother's employment in the care of very young children then, women's employment is shown to positively influence the health and education of children. These findings are also generally in accord with earlier results showing women's income from work to contribute substantially to the upliftment of families' socio-economic conditions.

Housework Management and Household Decision-Making. Presented in this final section are research findings taken primarily from the Philippines Status of Women Survey on the effects of women's employment on the conduct of housework and their participation in household decision-making. Since women's market work is known to reduce their time at

housework, of interest is the extent to which their employment effects a transfer of housework to other family members. And since household decision-making on matters pertaining to food and children's needs are generally within women's domain, of concern is whether women's employment increases their participation in "male" decision-making areas, as in those matters pertaining to household expenditures and other financial (e.g. savings, loans, investments) decisions of the household. Information on these is expected to provide some indications of the changes in women's traditional area of domestic responsibility once they enter marketwork. It is also expected to provide a useful complement on other information regarding the changes that occur in workplaces as a consequence of women's entry into market activities.

Table 4 presents the average number of hours that Filipino employed and non-working wives devote to housework per week, along with their respective husbands' time inputs to similar housework activities. Consistent with expectations, wives are shown to devote much more time to housework than husbands'; and within wives' employment status groups, for employed wives to devote much less time to housework than non-working wives. Examination of the detailed time allocation data further reveals the reduction in the employed wives' domestic time inputs to occur in all areas of housework from dish washing, cooking, food preparation and cleaning to child care. On the other hand, husbands' time in housework remains little affected by the employment of wives (those with employed wives spending only an hour more on housework than husbands of non-working wives), indicating no effective transfer of housework

to husbands. Interestingly however, the husbands of employed wives are found to participate in a greater variety of housework (e.g. marketing, cooking, dishwashing, child care), whereas husbands of non-working wives tend to restrict their housework participation in the "male" tasks of house and appliance repairs and water collection (a male task in the Philippines). The survey data further show fewer of the households with employed wives to engage in house and appliance repairs and in water collection; indicating that perhaps the households with working wives are better able to install piped-in water in their homes, build sturdier houses, or buy new appliances that render the above "male tasks" less necessary in their households. To the extent therefore that the households of employed wives are better equipped with household amenities, leading husbands to spend time in the more "female" tasks of marketing, cooking, and the like, the housework assistance of husbands may be of greater importance than is presently reflected in the absolute number of hours they devote to housework. Much more qualitative information however is needed to look into these arrangements and to assess men's involvement in housework when their wives enter marketwork.

Table 4. Wives' and husbands' time (hrs./wk.) in housework and marketwork: HH's of employed and non-working wives: Urban households, Philippines

	HH's with only husband in marketwork		HH's with both spouses in marketwork	
	Wives	Husbands	Wives	Husbands
Housework	46.7	14.7	29.7	15.6
Marketwork	0.0	49.0	47.2	50.8
All work	46.7	63.7	76.9	66.4

Source: Miralao, Virginia A. Women-in-development 3-Region survey, Institute of Philippine Culture, Ateneo de Manila University, 1983.

At this point, it should be mentioned that while the participation of husbands in housework is considered an essential element of sexual egalitarianism, the issue has been largely ignored in many Asian countries, given the common notion that relatives and domestic helpers are easily available to deload employed mothers of housework. But while case studies report some employed mothers to receive badly needed child care and housekeeping assistance from relatives, time-use studies (which readily reflect employed mothers' double doses of work) indicate the number of employed mothers with access to parents or other relatives to be a minority. Similarly, employed mothers with domestic helpers are found to constitute less than a fifth of urban employed wives in Taiwan and the Philippines, and for these to be limited to a few middle-income households.[16] Hence the participation of husbands (and children) in housework can assume greater significance in deloading women's work burdens, in the same way that other measures as the provision of basic necessities to households (e.g.piped-in-water in homes) and affordable home technologies can do much to reduce women's household chores.

Finally, findings on household decision-making patterns in the Philippines generally reveal wives and husbands to participate jointly and equally in household decisions, although some amount of gender-typing is noted in certain areas of decision-making.[17] On the whole, wives are found more dominant in decisions pertaining to food, the acquisition of household durables, clothing expenditures, savings, and children's education, whereas husbands are more dominant in matters related to house repairs, construction, and renovation expenses, loans, investments and

the number of children couples are to have. Certain differences however emerge when decision-making patterns are examined in households where the wife is employed and in those where she is not. In decision areas tilting towards female dominance as those mentioned above, there are fewer employed than non-working wives making the decisions dominantly or solely on their own. In the "male" decision-making areas on the other hand, there are also fewer husbands of employed women (than husbands of non-working wives) making the decisions dominantly or solely by themselves. Consequently, the proportions of households exhibiting jointand equal decision patterns is generally higher among those of employed than non-working wives. Further analysis also indicates the positive influence of women's employment on their decision-making roles to hold true particularly in the male area of loan decisions, after introducing controls for levels of household income, the age and education of wives, and other factors that may influence women's decision-making powers within the household. As in the analysis of the spouses' participation in housework therefore, there are indications that the employment of women may reduce the gender-typing of household decision-making areas.

Summary and Conclusions

Given the increasing absorption of women in non-agricultural activities, this paper set out to review study findings bearing on the household consequences of women's modern sector employment. Such household consequences may be indicative of the broader types of changes that

may occur with the larger scale entry of women into market work; and may also be useful in the identification of the kinds of social support that would encourage women's entry and stay in the labor force.

The foregoing review indicates women's employment to have many beneficial effects on households. The depressing effect of women's modern-sector work on family size, demonstrated by data from several Asian countries, is generally acknowledged to be beneficial not only in terms of the demographic concerns of national governments, but more immediately in terms of the well-being of children and the general economic conditions of households. The employment of women is shown likewise to be of crucial importance in the economic support of families, in view of the limited incomes of households that are insufficient in meeting the requirements for living, or in enabling families to improve on their economic conditions. Women's cash earnings are variously shown to go into the purchase of food and basic essentials, and other household durables, although the positive impact of women's employment on children's health and nutrition and education may best illustrate the long-term significance of women's earnings in improving the welfare of hosueholds. In the area of housework and household decision-making, women's employment is not found to bring about dramatic changes in women's and men's roles in the home. With the possible exception of the few women who are able to afford domestic help, and others fortunate enough to have access to other relatives, employed women continue to carry the prime responsibility for housework. Nonetheless, thereare indications that women's employment may promote some gender-crossing in housework activities and

household decision-making. However, to those concerned with the issue of sexual equality, these changes may be far from substantial. On the other hand, to those steeped in their traditional sex-role images, changes showing the husbands of employed women to participate more in "female" designated household tasks and decision-areas, and the employed wives to participate more in male decision-areas may already be more than they may want to admit.

The adverse consequences of women's employment are more apparent in the reduced time that employed women devote to the care of young children, and to the well-being of the mothers themselves. Faced with their dual domestic and income-earning roles, employed mothers are forced into a continuously balancing act of cutting down on child care and housework to meet the demands of marketwork; curtailing their market activities to attend to family responsibilities; and foregoing rest and leisure to meet home and market demands. Though attention has been called many times to women's double burdens, little has been done to address the issue. Yet there are areas within the direct influence of policy where supportive programs for women may be instituted. With regards women's employment, mention has been made of the need to correct gender wage-differentials and improve on women's wages so that women need not spend unnecessarily long hours in the market. In addition, the provision of piped-in-water and other basic facilities to households, the promotion of efficient and affordable cooking stoves and other home technologies, as well as of cheap but sanitary and nutritious food services (e.g. street foods) can provide much needed assistance to employed wives. But since many

other household services currently performed by women cannot be traded in the market nor met by institutionalized services, no less important are other efforts that would encourage husbands to share in child care and housekeeping, and to recognize women's employment not only as part of the family's strategy for survival, but as an essential component in women's own development. Without these kinds of support, we would only have succeeded in giving women two jobs to do under very trying conditions.

NOTES

[1]These problems are apparent for instance in the analyses of the female-employment-fertility relationship where women's employment may be a function of large family sizes though it may also lead to a reduction in family size. Similarly, the association between women's employemnt and levels of household incomes reveal women's employment to be a function of limited household incomes, but for women's income from work to also raise household incomes.

[2]The concept of role conflict that has been used widely to analyze women's changing roles suggests the employment of women as entailing adjustments, with women minimizing their involvement in traditional wife-mother roles; other feminist views also argue that that the industrial mode of production will erode the existing sexual division of labor and the organization of work and households: See articles in Rosaldo, Michelle Zimbalist and L. Lamphere, eds. "Women, Culture and Society", Stanford University Press, 1974; and in Schelegel, Alice, ed. "Toward a Theory of Sexual Stratification", Columbia University Press, 1977.

[3]The poor working conditions and other exploitative practices in female manufacturing industries are described in , among others, "Changing Role of S. E. Asian Women: The Global Assembly Line and the Social Manipulators of Women on the Job". Pacific Research Vol. 9 (5-6) 1978, and Lim, Linda Y. C. "Women Workers in Multinational Corporations: The Case of the Electronics Industry in Malaysia and Singapore". Michigan Occasional Papers No. IX, 1978.

[4]Concepcion, Mercedes. "Female Labor Force Participation and Fertility". International Labour Review 109(5-6), 1974.

[5]In "The Socio-economic Determinants of Human Fertility". The Population Division, UN 1980.

[6]See Zosa-Feranil, Imelda. "Female Employemnt and the Family: A Case Study of the Bataan Export Processing Zone"; Chang, Yu-Hsia L. "Women, Work and the Family in a Developing Society: Taiwan"; Papers presented at the Conference on Women in the Urban and Industrial Workforce: Southeast and East Asia, Manila, 1982.

[7]O'Brien, Leslie. "The Effect of Industrialization on Women: Western and Current Southeast Asian Experiences"; and T.G. McGee. "Women Workers or Working Women? Some Preliminary Thoughts on the Proletarianization Process in the Export Processing Zones of Southeast and East Asia". Papers presented at the Conference on Women in the Urban and Industrial Workforce: Southeast and East Asia, Manila, 1982.

[8]Krishna, Raj. "Women and Development Planning: with Special Reference to Asia and the Pacific:. Paper prepared for the Asian-Pacific Development Centre, Kuala Lumpur, 1982.

[9]Miralao, Virginia A. "Women in Development 3-Region Survey". Institute of Philippine Culture, Ateneo de Manila University.

[10] in 1981 at the time of the survey, the exchange rate was equal to about ₱9.00 to US$1.00.

[11] Wolf, Diane. "Rural Females to the Factory: Household and Village Perspectives from Central Java". Paper presented at the Conference on the Women in the Urban and Industrial Workforce: Southeast and East Asia, Manila, 1982. Though Wolf says that the young girls' wages are not sufficient to fully cover their own maintenance, their wages assure their families a constant source of cash.

[12] Salaff, Janet and Aline Wong. "Women's Work, Factory, Family and Social Class in an Industrializing Order:, Paper presented at the Conference on the Women in the Urban and Industrial Workforce: Southeast and East Asia, Manila , 1982.

[13] Miralao, Virginia A. ibid.

[14] Jones, Gavin. "Economic Growth and Changing Female Employment Structure in the Cities of Southeast and East Asia". Paper presented at the Conference on the Women in the Urban and Industrial Workforce: Southeast and East Asia, Manila, 1982.

[15] Popkin, Barry. "Women, Work and Child Welfare". Paper read at the International Center for Research on Women Workshop on "Women in Poverty: What Do We Know?" Elkridge, Md. 1978.

[16] Chang, Yu-Hsia A. ibid.

[17] These patterns are also discussed in Castillo, Gelia "The Filipino Woman as Manpower: The Image and the Empirical Reality". Council for Asian Manpower Studies, University of the Philippines. 1976.

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WOMEN'S STUDIES AND RESEARCH IN ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

(Item 5 (f) of the provisional agenda)

WOMEN'S STUDIES IN ASIA AND THE PACIFIC: EMERGING TRADE, GAPS AND RESEARCH PRIORITIES*

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WOMEN'S STUDIES IN ASIA AND THE PACIFIC: EMERGING TRENDS, GAPS AND RESEARCH PRIORITIES

Introduction

A major push toward studies with a specific focus on women's lives in the Asian and Pacific region was undeniably given by the International Women's Year (even though small numbers of such studies did flow in prior to the 1970s). Almost a decade has passed since, and over these years a fair number of studies, involving a diversity of themes, methodologies and academic disciplines, have emerged. It is therefore perhaps time that some assessment be made of the direction that such research has taken in the region, thus far, and certain priority areas be defined at least in terms of themes. In fact, such priority areas have, from time to time, been indicated in research papers, development planning documents, documents of international aid-giving agencies, etc. Inevitably, an attempt to define such priorities involves an element of subjectivity. But all said, a useful starting point is still provided by a consideration of women's studies in the general context of concerns expressed in social science literature, vis-a-vis the nature and direction of socio-economic development in the countries of Asia and the Pacific. A brief review of some of these concerns would clearly be of help in pin-pointing the significant issues relating to women.

The region we are looking at -- Asia and the Pacific -- is of course a diverse one, and even within the main geographic sub-regions (South Asia, Southeast Asia, West Asia, East Asia and the Pacific) socio-economic differences are apparent. In some instances, these differences are relatively small -- as in the case of South Asia and broadly Southeast Asia, and in other instances they are large -- as in the case of East Asia (which includes

countries as diverse as South Korea, China and Japan), and the Pacific (which includes both the relatively poor countries of the South Pacific Islands, and the highly industrialised ones of Australia and New Zealand).

Yet, if we were to exclude for the moment the highly industrialised countries of this region, such as Japan, Australia and New Zealand, and also West Asia, some common economic features do emerge: for instance (as seen from Table 1) with the exception of Singapore and Korea, in all the other countries listed, the population is primarily rural-based, with agriculture as its principal source of livelihood. This pattern holds all the more for the female work force. Further, in most of the noted countries, the pattern of ownership and control of land and other productive assets is highly unequal, making the consideration of class relations a matter of primary importance. Also, since the mid-1960s in particular, some significant new direccions have emerged in the economic development of these countries. Among the notable ones are the emphasis on the so-called green revolution strategy for agricultural development in most South Asian and Southeast Asian countries; the increasing shift from subsistence to cash cropping, in both Asia and the Pacific; the expansion of the manufacturing and service sectors; and especially the spread of manufacturing within free trade zones under multinational corporation control in several countries of Southeast Asia and to a lesser extent in South Asia.

At the same time, there has emerged a gradual recognition that many of these changes, which have added to the rates of growth of GDP of these countries, have in most cases not led to the expected "trickle down" of the fruits of development to the poorest sections. (As seen from Table 2, by existing estimates, in many of the countries in the region, over 45% or more of the rural populations are below the poverty line.) In fact, evidence

indicates that there is even likely to have been a worsening of the conditions of the large section of the poor in many of these countries. This recognition has both followed and been followed by a major focus in social science literature, especially from the early seventies, on issues concerning poverty, employment and income distribution, and related to these, issues of the choice of appropriate technology, uneven development (both internally and internationally), the negative effects of international dependency on underdeveloped countries, etc.

However, what is also striking about the bulk of this literature is the almost total neglect (until very recently) of the gender dimension. By and large, these studies throw no light on questions such as: How have women been affected by the noted directions of developmental changes? Have they been affected in ways distinct from the men of their socio-economic class, and if so, how and why?

Posed in this way, the area opened up for research is vast and complex. It covers both the need to understand what is the direction of change, and what the directions of change are likely to be, vis-a-vis women of different socio-economic classes. These areas, in broad terms, could be identified as:

(a) women's access to employment, education and training

(b) women and technological change in agriculture and industry

(c) women and the overall strategies for agricultural and industrial growth

(d) women and poverty (including the issue of female-headedness and women's access to productive resources)

(e) women and migration (especially poverty-induced migration)

(f) women and the family (especially the intra-household distribution of work loads, income and consumption items, including food)

(g) women and decision-making in both the private and public spheres

(h) women's struggles, organisations, associations, unions, etc.

(i) women, state policy and planning

(j) women and the international economy.

Some of these aspects would, of course, be of less concern than others in the context of particular countries in the region. The rural/urban focus would likewise need to vary by country. Also, there would clearly be inter-linkages between many of the noted aspects. For instance, women's educational/training level would be linked with their employment status, and both of these could have implications for women's role in household and community decision-making. Again, when the issue of women and technological change is being considered, it would be necessary to examine the implications for employment, work, poverty and so on. Intra-family relationships and distribution would impinge on each aspect.

Literature falling within the scope of women's studies, in the region, has to some extent sought to tackle several of these aspects, both at the conceptual and the empirical level. This paper seeks to provide a broad overview of the direction that women's studies have taken, the extent to which the themes tackled by existing literature cover the noted areas of concern, and the gaps which remain. For this overview, reliance has been placed primarily on material from annotated and other bibliographies, articles reviewing the literature, articles reviewing women's studies in specific regions, and lead articles on the topics indicated. The overview does not claim to be comprehensive or exhaustive, but it seeks to provide basic pointers. (For a comprehensive overview, a detailed review of literature relating to each region,

by country, would need to be undertaken.) Some issues concerning the methodology of women's studies will also be discussed.

An Overview

From a review of women's studies in several selected countries of the Asian and Pacific region (viz., India, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Kore, Fiji and Papua New Guinea) what is apparent, on the one hand, are the differences between the countries, and between the sub-regions within which the countries fall, in the volume and range of available literature on women, as well as in the coverage of critical issues and in emphasis. In terms of the sub-regions, within the ESCAP regions, for instance, women's studies are seen to be still in their infancy in some areas, as in the South Pacific Island countries, but moving towards a degree of maturity in others, as in South Asia and Southeast Asia. Within these sub-regions, again, some countries are found to lead in terms of the volume of material available and the diversity of aspects covered, as India in South Asia, and Indonesia and the Philippines in Southeast Asia.

On the other hand, certain common features in the broad directions that women's studies are taking in the region are noticeable, as are the overlaps in the aspects on which there is a dearth of literature. One trend which is apparent is the gradual move towards primary data based, micro-studies with an analytical problem-focused and hypotheses testing thrust, in contrast to the predominance in earlier years of largely descriptive studies which used base line data to provide a macro-picture of the status of women in the country. Most countries of the region, with the possible exception of some of the South Pacific Island countries, have by now a reasonable number of studies providing basic, gender-specific information and analysis on demograpic

aspects, educational levels and occupational distribution.) In some sense this move from the macro to the micro, from the general to the particular, may be seen as a natural development, since an initial description and macro-analysis provides a necessary base, and also sometimes throws up hypotehses that can often be tested or explored fruitfully only in in-depth micro-analysis. (Aggregative macro-perspectives often obscure underlying contradictory trends and effects.) At the same time, it is necessary to keep the macro-perspective in mind, and to refer back from the specific to the general and from the empirical to the theoretical.

In most countries of the region, while the trend towards micro-analysis is noticeable, it is still very much at the beginning stages, and many issues remain unexplored. One general lacunae of significance lies in the dearth of studies which focus on the implications for women of planned or unplanned changes and shifts within the economy. An obvious example is the issue of technological change in the agricultural sector. In contrast to the prolific literature in the South Asian sub-continent and even in many South-east Asian countries, on the socio-economic implications of the new agricultural technology on different classes of households, there is hardly any literature on the implications by gender. To the extent that some recent studies have a gender focus, the main emphasis is on women's work in the fields. Sometimes this is the sole aspect studied.

This is inadequate. Technological change needs to be viewed within a much more comprehensive framework from a variety of angles, taking into account aspects such as:

(a) the effect on women's <u>total</u> work burden (including field-related work and non-field work), health, access to and control over family or personal income, access to household consumption items, and participation in household decision-making;

(b) possible conflicts in interest between women of different socio-economic classes, with any given technology;

(c) the impact of the technology on the overall agrarian structure such as through shifts in the pattern of land ownership and control, which may lead to the impoverishment of particular classes of households, and of the women of such households;

(d) the access which women have to knowledge of new technology and agricultural practices.

Existing studies have focused only on individual aspects. None are comprehensive even as regards covering the issues mentioned in (a). In this context, the likelihood of conflicting interests between women of different classes are especially important to take into account, where technology is labour-saving: such technology while saving the labour of women in the economically better-off households, often displaces women of labouring households for whom the work is a necessary source of income. This has been noted to have happened with the mechanisation of harvesting and threshing in several Asian countries. Again, aspects such as the effect of technological change on agrarian structures are necessary to keep in mind because the long-term implications of a technology might be quite different from the immediate short-term effects: for instance, the introduction of high-yielding variety (HYV) crops is noted to have an immediate positive effect on the demand for labour and thus has the potential for increasing the employment opportunities for the landless. However, in areas where the distribution of land ownership is skewed, as in South Asia, HYVs have often been accompanied by labour-displacing mechanisation and the eviction of tenants.

In general, it is important that both unplanned changes in the economy and those planned in terms of government policies and programmes (whether directed

towards women, or of a broader nature) be "monitored" to trace their implications for women of different socio-economic classes. (For an interesting discussion on possible approaches for monitoring changes in women's conditions, see Palmer and Bukhwald, 1978.)

Also, studies which focus on women need to keep, as a reference point, the wider socio-economic trends within countries (which are noted in the general social science literature). Many micro-studies examining the condition of women tend to be undertaken without such a reference point and within an essentially static and "isolated" context. This is especially true of many "case studies" which, while providing valuable and detailed data on women's work conditions in selected industries or occupations, often provide no conceptual and theoretical link to indicate the wider context within which the "cases" can be located.

In addition to the issue of technological change, and in some sense associated with it, are other aspects which have been inadequately explored in most countries of the region. These include: women, poverty and poverty-induced migration; women's work conditions in the "informal" sector; the incidence, characteristics and factors under-lying female headedness; and the intra-household distribution between male and female members of income and consumption items (especially the distribution of food relative to energy expended). Also, there appears to be a dearth of documentation on women's struggles for economic and social improvement in status, and for self-reliance and self-determination, either in the context of organised set-ups such as women's organisations, trade unions, etc., or outside that context.[1]

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[1] Some attempt at documenting such grass-roots experiences in the Third World is being made by the ILO, Geneva, through a recently initiated project.

Apart from these gaps in the literature, what is also noticeable of the studies done in several countries, is the disproportionate coverage vis-a-vis the various regions within each country. In Malaysia, for instance, virtually every study is based in the Malay Peninsula, to the neglect of the regions of Sabah and Sarawak. In Indonesia, similarly, most studies are concentrated in Java. A conscious directing of research to the neglected regions is required to reduce this geographic imbalance.

Between sub-regions in the ESCAP region, there are of course likely to be differences in the particular emphasis -- rural/urban, agriculture/industry -- within which many of the critical issues identified need to be considered. For instance, a significant difference between South Asia and Southeast Asia is in the overall greater importance of the industrial sector as an alternative source of employment for women in the latter, rather than in the former. This refers to the rising trend in women's industrial employment, especially in the export-oriented industries, in Southeast Asia relative to the declining trend in women's industrial employment noted in parts of South Asia, especially in India. Hence, the urban context, plus the pattern and nature of employment and work conditions within the organised sector, assume greater importance in the ASEAN-region countries, relative to the South Asian countries. This does not of course explain or justify the relative neglect until recently of research on rural women, in some Southeast Asian countries with predominantly rural/agricultural populations.

While poverty may be a priority research area in several countries of the region, in the East Asian region, in countries such as South Korea, the issue of absolute poverty assumes relatively lower significance: as noted only 7% of the South Korean population is estimated to be below the poverty line. While the gender distribution of the poor still needs attention, issues such as

the implications of noted dramatic shifts in women's occupational structure in recent years is a much more striking aspect demanding exploration.

The strategy for growth, in most Southeast Asian countries and even in some East Asian countries, has been principally export-oriented, with strong inter-linkages with foreign capital and multinationals, compared with South Asia, and in particular with India, where the emphasis has been on import-substitution through indigenous capital investment. The form and degree of penetration of foreign capital in the economies of Southeast Asia relative to South Asia, therefore, differ. The role of foreign capital in the exploitation of cheap female labour also varies from the relatively more direct forms noticeable to Southeast Asia, as in the electronics industry of Singapore, Malaysia and South Korea, to the more direct links, mediated through local networks and middlemen, in many parts of South Asia.

In fact, given these differences, it would be important not merely to fill the gaps in research on certain critical aspects within countries, but also to promote cross-country, inter-regional comparisons. Existing studies attempting such comparisons could be classified broadly into two categories: those in which primary analysis of cross-country data has been undertaken, as, for instance, by Phongpaichit (1982), for the Southeast Asian region, and those in which the cross-country or cross-regional comparisons are based on a review of literature (e.g., Nelson, 1979; Agarwal, 1981; Whythe and Whythe, 1982; Eisold, 1982). Both kinds of studies are important and need to be undertaken more widely. For example, the noted differences in the ways in which foreign capital penetrates under-developed economies, the specific linkages between such capital and the host country, and how this affects foreign capital's ability to exploit female labour, would be an interesting subject for any cross-regional analysis, which could yield useful theoretical insights as well.

Finally, a few words need to be said on some methodological aspects. First, as noted, it is necessary to link the particular with the general, and to place micro-studies on women in the broader perspective. Second, existing biases in macro-data collection on women need to be reduced and where possible eliminated. As a number of studies have pointed out (e.g., Agarwal, 1982; Jain, 1982; Sinha, 1982) these biases are particularly noticeable in relation to the classification of women workers. One important source of bias lies in the definitions adopted which tend to categorise much of the work that women do within the home as "housework", even if it relates to activities such as food processing, cattle-rearing, etc., and which lead to most women being classified as "housewives". But biases also stem from respondents, wherein even when the women are earners they may be declared as "housewives" by their husbands, or may classify themselves as such, especially in communities where women's involvement in manual work outside the home is seen as lowering the family prestige. Respondent biases are aggravated by the fact that enumerators and respondents are typically male. All these factors lead to a considerable under-counting of women as workers in most countries.

Third, in some aspects, the macro-data base itself needs to be developed further. Singh (1980), for instance, points to the need to gather more detailed macro-data on women's migration patterns in India, where 77% of all rural migrants are women. She notes that much of female migration is assumed to be marriage migration, yet micro-studies indicate that women often migrate for work. As a more general point, micro-studies can often be very useful in raising doubts about the accuracy of macro-data, and need to be used as a reference point in refining definitions, concepts and perceptions vis-a-vis women, in the collection of macro-data.

Fourth, women's studies need to be seen not merely as another aspect of "academic" research. In so far as they are meant to provide a better understanding of the nature and causes of women's oppression and subordination, it is necessary on the one hand that the content of the research is such that it can be of some relevance in improving the condition of the women studied, and on the other hand, the way in which the research is conducted should not be "oppressive" to those researched. On the latter point, an important issue is the relationship between the researcher and the researched, when primary data is collected. This aspect has significance from two angles: (a) the degree to which the social scientist can identify with the people whose situation is being studied, can make a crucial difference to the quality of the data collected. Such identification in fact implies establishing a non-hierarchical relationship with those researched. While this could apply to all social science data gathering, it becomes especially important when those researched are women, in order to gain an understanding of the hidden and invisible dimensions of women's lives, be it the nature of the work undertaken by them, especially in the confines of the home, or the nature of their relationships with the men of their household. Such research also holds the potential for the voices of the women studied to be heard and their points of view recorded. (b) The establishment of a non-hierarchical relationship with those researched is important if the research is not to recreate oppression in the research content, by reducing those researched to the category of "objects" (see also Mies, 1978, on this point).

A related aspect is the need to ensure some back-flow of information about the research findings to those researched, so that the information gathered can enable the latter also to get a new understanding of their situation. Research designed with the possibility of such a return flow of

information is also more likely to be of social relevance. (Mies, 1978, also emphasises some of these aspects and raises several other points of interest with regard to the methodology of women's studies.)

Fifth, women's studies can play a significant role in expanding the scope of theoretical research in the social sciences. For instance, the attempt among Western feminist scholars to understand the basis of women's oppression and subordination and the forms it has taken historically, has helped to highlight many of the limitations of existing, theoretical frameworks offered in the social sciences. Likewise, the attempt to determine the value of women's labour time spent in activities within the home has pointed to the limitations of many of the existing tools and models for making such an assessment. Women's studies have, in this sense, opened up new areas for theoretical work, and provided perhaps one of the strongest critiques of several accepted doctrines in the social sciences in recent years.

However, much of the theoretical work in women's studies has emerged from Western Capitalist countries, has drawn upon the experience mainly of advanced capitalism, and has been undertaken largely by Western scholars. The body of work that has thus emerged is undoubtedly valuable in throwing light on several aspects relating to women's subordinate position, which would be common cross-culturally. But there is also a need for a greater Third World focus in such work and of the involvement of Third World scholars, to evolve locally relevant concepts and theories, taking account of the specificity of certain social structures (for instance, the issue of caste in India) in the context of the historical and current experiences of their countries.

Table 1: Some Features of the Population and Labour Force in Asia and the Pacific

	% Rural to total population*	% Economically active female population**	% Distribution of the active female population by economic sector (1970)**			Per capita Incomes US$ (1980)*
			Agriculture	Industry	Services	
South Asia						
Bangladesh	89	12.1	90.9	3.7	5.4	130
India	78	26.2	80.7	10.8	8.5	240
Nepal	95	38.5	96.8	1.3	1.9	140
Pakistan	72	5.7	69.3	16.0	15.7	300
Sri Lanka	73	17.0	65.6	12.9	21.5	270
Southeast Asia						
Indonesia	80	20.8	64.9	11.3	23.8	430
Malaysia	71	21.5	68.1	9.4	22.5	1,620
Philippines	64	23.3	35.2	16.8	48.0	690
Singapore	0	20.6	3.1	33.7	63.2	4,430
Thailand	86	42.6	83.8	4.4	11.8	670
East Asia						
Rep. of Korea	45	24.2	60.0	15.2	24.8	1,520
Japan	22	40.1	26.5	26.1	47.4	9,890
Pacific						
Fiji	63	18.0	51.2	27.1	21.7	-
Papua New Guinea	82	-	-	-	-	780

Sources: * World Bank (1980): World Development Report 1982, pp.111-112, 148-149; and Ward and Proctor (1980):

** ILO (1978): "Women's Participation in the Economic Activity of Asian Countries", Document No.DPW/16, Training Seminar on Development Planning for Women, Bangkok, Thailand, September 14-October 25, 1978, pp.3, 8.

Notes: 1) "Economically active" refers to participation in production of goods and services; unremunerated housework is excluded.

2) The distribution of the active female population by economic sector usually excludes persons whose situation is not clearly defined or who are seeking work for the first time; in a very few cases unemployed women workers are also excluded.

Table 2: Rural Poverty and Inequality in Asia

Country	Period	Rural Population below the Poverty Line		Rural Gini Coefficient for Income Distribution	Gini Coefficient for Land Distribution
		% of Total Rural Population	in millions		
Bangladesh	1973/74	94	64.0	0.44	0.57
India	1970/71	48	207.3	0.38	0.63
Pakistan	1971/72	58	-	0.29	0.60 (1960)
Indonesia (all)	1976	50.2[a]	-	0.46 (1971)[d]	-
Indonesia (Java only)	1976	58.7[a]	-	-	-
Malaysia (West)	1970	45	3.2	0.46*	0.44 (1960)
Philippines	1971	64	17.1	0.47	0.51
Thailand	1975/76	28[b]	-	0.45 (1970)	0.41 (1971)
South Korea (rural and urban)	1976	7[c]	-	0.31 (1971)	-

Notes: * Relates to the whole country.

Sources: [a] World Bank (1979): Employment and Income Distribution in Indonesia, Report No.2378-IND, World Bank, Washington D.C., p.84.

[b] World Bank (1978): Thailand: Toward a Development Strategy of Full Participation: A Basic Economic Report, Report No.2059-TH, World Bank, Washington D.C., p.62.

[c] World Bank (1979): Korea: Rapid Growth and Search for New Perspectives, Report No.2477-KO, World Bank, Washington DC, p.46.

[d] Ranis, Gustav (1980): "Prospective Southeast Asian Development Strategies in a Changing International Environment", in New Directions of Asia's Development Strategies: Economic Growth Department, Institute of Developing Economies, Tokyo, p.4.

All other figures are taken from:

Asian Development Bank (1977): Rural Asia: Challenge and Opportunity, Praeger Special Studies, New York, pp.62, 64, 98.